photo by hali panneton

WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 9, NO. 3 | THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION | JULY 1998

"Creating community...involves this most difficult work of negotiating real divisions, of considering boundaries before we go crashing through, and of pondering our differences before we can ever agree on the terms of our sameness." Patrici a J. Williams

A practical proposal for providing quality shelter for all

Housing: Soaring Costs Hit Home

Megan Cornish

For two weeks last summer in Chicago, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) opened up its rental assistance program to new applications. Of 100,000 people who applied, 75,000 were told they would have to wait more than five years for help. Low-income housing aid funds have been frozen nationally at 1995 levels, and the government no longer builds any new public housing. Twelve and a half million people who suffer from what HUD calls "worst case" needs nevertheless receive no federal assistance. Meanwhile, rents are rising. In New York City, where U.S. rent control originated, most tenants still spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent, and 10 percent of families double up in apartments to meet costs. But in 32 states, rent control is not allowed at all. Statistics like these reflect the ever-widening gap between rich and poor. In the last 25 years, U.S. household incomes have dropped 30 percent - and for African Americans, more than 50 percent. Result: a monumental housing crisis growing hourly - and the promise of an epic battle to come, as demands for just solutions likewise escalate.

Spiral of hardship.

The brunt of the housing squeeze falls on those already at the greatest social disadvantage. Home ownership rates for families with parents younger than 30, just entering the job market and low-paid, have fallen 15 percent since 1980. Seniors frequently lose their homes when pensions are too small to cover mortgage payments or taxes. Massive numbers of the mentally ill were turned out into the streets by wholesale hospital closures in the 1980s. Farmworkers are routinely exempted from laws governing housing standards. The disabled still struggle to find accessible, affordable accommodation. For queer people, rarely covered by anti-discrimination statutes, housing difficulties are an everyday fact of life. And immigrants, who are excluded from normal forms of public aid, keenly feel the housing crunch as well.

Race and sex hurdles.

In 1967, the federal Kerner Commission warned that the U.S. was in danger of dividing into two societies, "one black, one white - separate and unequal." A foundation report released this year makes it clear this has come to pass. Between 1970 and 1990, the number of Black families earning less than $15,000 per year more than doubled; home ownership rates for African Americans are far lower than whites; they are twice as likely to live in below-par housing; and they are 60 percent of homeless people. Economically, the U.S. has also become two societies divided by gender - and this gap, too, is worsening, especially thanks to President Clinton's destruction of welfare. Women and their children make up the majority of those in need of housing aid and a ballooning number of the homeless population.

Democrats and Republicans are responsible.

Both major parties consistently legislate policies that benefit the affluent at the expense of workers. Only one-third of those who qualify for housing aid receive it. Yet more than 80 percent of those who earn in excess of $100,000 annually get housing subsidies in the form of tax deductions on mortgage interest. Their deductions far surpass HUD's entire budget! In 1995, Congress scrapped the rule that mandated one-for-one replacement for every low-income unit lost. More recently, the House of Representatives voted to slash $2.2 billion from $12.6 billion in rental aid funds and apply it toward military deployments and disaster programs. If their action becomes law, an estimated one million additional people will become homeless. Meanwhile, Clinton proposes a budget that would add 400,000 more families to the total receiving housing aid - but this is roughly equal only to the number of households needing help in Washington state alone! But enormous as the housing problem may be, the solution is simple. The money clearly exists; it's a question of priorities. Our politicians believe that public welfare for the wealthy minority is a social privilege; it's up to working people to fight for the position that the well-being of all is a social responsibility. Public benefit programs were won during the Great Depression via mass coalition movements of labor with the unemployed. They were expanded during the '60s, when the upsurge sparked by the Civil Rights Movement forced President Johnson to pursue a "War on Poverty" in order to stave off the specter of revolution. The scope of today's crisis demands that labor officials broaden their agenda. The times cry out for movement leaders who will fully support the fledgling Labor Party, build a new mass movement of the employed and unemployed, and fight for a decent life for all workers.

Program for change.

One key task is to demand that government free up funds by taxing big business and the rich and dismantling the Pentagon. Here are other steps toward providing quality housing for all:

* Launch a massive program to provide superior public housing for all in need within five years. Reinstitute one-for-one replacement of low-income housing.
* Pass federal rent control legislation and create a sliding scale of rent for all low-income workers based on their earnings.
* Reverse privatization of public housing; nationalize and renovate all slum/

(Continued page 11)

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The Real Unemployment Rate

Marc Breslow & Jesse Hahnel

The Clinton administration claims that unemployment has practically disappeared as a problem in the United States, with the rate reaching a 24-year low of 4.6 percent.

Yet this figure leaves millions of Americans mystified: If things are so great, why am I unemployed, and why do so many of my friends feel insecure about their jobs? Am I the only one out there who can't find full-time work?

We have a right to be mystified: The Department of Labor's statistics hide much of the unemployment and underemployment in the United States. Correctly calculated, the true unemployment rate in February 1998 was at least 7.8 percent, and the underemployment rate was 10.6 percent or more.

The Labor Department omits from its calculations two large groups of people: Everyone who wants a job but has not looked for one during the past month, due to discouragement or other difficulties — about 4.3 million people in its February 1998 survey. And everyone who has a part-time job but wants full-time work — about 3.9 million people.

There are several ways of recalculating to correct the Labor Department's errors. First let's add to the ranks of the unemployed those people who want jobs but did not look for work. If we do so, this yields an unemployment rate of 7.8 percent.

Second, suppose we treat those who are involuntarily part-time as being half-unemployed. If we add such people to the officially unemployed 6.4 million, and the 4.3 million who did not look for jobs, we get an unemployment rate of 9.2 percent. This means that almost one out of 10 Americans who wants a job cannot find one.

Let's use the term "underemployment" to include everyone who doesn't have a job and everyone who wants more work hours than they are able to get. All those who want full-time work but have only part-time jobs should be counted here. This yields an underemployment rate of 10.6 percent.

Undercounting joblessness in the United States has been going on for many years, and President Clinton is correct that the employment situation

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WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Correspondence, articles, art, and photographs are always welcome. Please, when possible, put articles on a 3.5" IBM-compatible disk (text preferred). Artwork and photos should be camera-ready/ black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295, wip@olywa.net, or come by our office and drop it in the "WIP Box" located in the Liberation Cafe.

Back Issues:

A complete set of back issues is located in the library of Liberation Cafe along with a chrono-index.

WIP is also being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Dave Campbell, Frank Hoffman, Teresa Jennings, Jerome Johnson, Margaret Love, Evelyn Montague, Wendy Ortiz, Hali Panneton, Tara Perkins, Marie Smith, Sylvia Smith, Pat Tassoni

Mission Statement:

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause:

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Governing Tool:

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:

Friday, July 24th

6pm at Liberation Cafe

Proofreading Meeting

Tuesday, July 28th
7 pm at Olympia Library

WORKS IN PROGRESS:
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Letters & Briefs

What's Freedom

If you do political or social activism - why? Why bother? What's in it for you? Why go to interminable meetings or march down the street carrying a sign? When will you stop -when your side has won? How will you know your side has won?

Will it be in the Gannett paper; "Freedom Victorious, Activists Go Home Jubilant!" "Crime Over, Police Turn In Their Guns!" "The Homeless Go Home, Bread and Roses Has Glorious Closing Down Party!" "50th Female U.S. Senator Sworn In - Feminists Rampant!"

What would do it for you? For me, it has something to do with freedom. If your activism is rooted somewhere near 4th and Washington Streets in aging downtown Olympia, what does it mean to be part of the worldwide struggle for freedom? Do you have to choose between the rich and the poor, the Albanians and the Serbs, the Israelis and the Palestinians, the old and the young, the Communists and the Anarchists?

What is freedom? It's an important question, even if, as an aging European-American with a job here in downtown Olympia, it would be said by many that I am free, and I should go home, already. Have some supper, turn on the T.V. I tend to ignore good advice, it makes me feel I'm wrong.

Tell *Works In Progress* what you think freedom is - send us some cards and letters about freedom. Let's work up a definition amongst ourselves, that we're willing to struggle for, to dream about, to act out.

Freedom maybe has to do in part with the amount of public space and the laws controlling that space. Or is freedom the same as safety. What price am I willing to pay right here in Olympia for my physical safety?

Whose rights, what rights, including my own, am I willing to compromise to promote my physical safety? To keep from being jostled on my rounds downtown, or from being robbed? How many prisons should be built? How many police does the city hire? Do I live in a gated "community" and only shop in the private space of Malls, who can "Refuse Service to Anyone"?

This all gets more complicated if we admit the poor among us also want to be safe. And admit we are afraid of the poor.

These are real issues right here in the Land of the Free, right here in downtown Olympia. Don't you think? Send WIP a note, a card on this, let us hear from you, OK?

Frank Hoffman

Which Police Officer Was Fired From Olympia?

CopWatch released a statement announcing the only change in the Olympia Police Department roster was that of Officer Joe Algiere, formerly badge number 44. He had been working for the OPD for quite a few years and is most likely the unnamed officer fired for apparently conducting personal business during working hours. He is the second officer fired in recent months for such behavior. The first was Fred Doughty, formerly badge number 19, who was also accused of stalking a woman.

Commander Bill Curtwright decided to retire; and according to CopWatch sources, Sargent Darrell Noble, badge number S5, has taken a job with the Attorney General's office. Both of these employees had been with the OPD since before the former Chief's 16 year reign. That Chief is still responsible for hiring 96% of the current officers, 25% of Sargents, 71% of Lieutenants, and 100% of current Commanders.

If you have any complaints about these officers (or any others), you should contact your city council member or write it up and send it to CopWatch at PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507. CopWatch reminds you to exercise your right to be silent and to observe the police.

Welfare Rights Support

Wednesday, July 1st 6-8pm
First United Methodist Church
1224 E. Legion Way

Come and join in a discussion about WorkFirst. Find out how you can get involved in changing some policies. Learn about WROC's plan to "Stop the Clock" for some parents.

Snacks and child care provided. Sponsored by Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition and parents who care. Call 753-4459 for info and child care.

Olympia Coalition for Equal Opportunity

Wednesday, July 1st at 7pm
Olympia Community Center, rm 103

The Olympia Coalition for Equal Opportunity is a local coalition of groups and individuals who seek to oppose Initiative 200. The coalition has intentionally formed as a broad group to include both actual campaign members as well as other activists who choose not to join an actual campaign. Our primary goal is to educate the public as to the true intent of I-200. We will be working with labor organizations, civil rights groups, political action committees and others to mobilize local people to join forces to reaffirm our commitment to affirmative action.

Help defeat Initiative 200 and defend affirmative action. Call 360/943-7469 for more information.

Thurston Tenants Union

Monday, July 13th 7-9pm
Columbia Legal Services Offices

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SOUTH SOUND GREEN PAGES

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JULY 1998

Question: How long did General Eisenhower intend to keep the U.S. involved in Europe through NATO?

Answer: 10 years, or until 1960.

"If in 10 years, all American troops stationed in Europe for national defense purposes have not been returned to the United States, then this whole project [NATO] will have failed." Dwight Eisenhower

Source: *The Defense Monitor,* journal of The Center for Defense Information

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JUNE S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	AUGUST S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	**Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all others because you were born in it.** George Bernard Shaw	**1** **1922**- Railworkers strike against 12.5% wage cut ordered by R/R Labor Board. Fed judge bans strike against railroads	**2** **1964**- Pres. Johnson signs into law the 1964 Civil Rights Act **1979**- Supreme Court upholds most aspects of the Boldt Decision	**3** **1919**- Military troops quell Chicago race riots; at least 31 dead, and 500 injured **1892**- Homestead Strike begins order	**4** **1776**- Declaration of Independence slave trade ban deleted **1913**- Troops fire on gold mine strikers in Johannesburg, 40 die
5 **1995** - Amnesty International critizes United States for an increase in police brutality, and use of the death penalty.	**6** **1904**- African-Americans form the National Liberty party and nominate George E. Taylor for U.S. President	**7** **1996** - Racially motivated arson was cause of fire at a predominantly African-American church in Graham, WA	**8** **1876**- White terrorists attacked Black Republicans in Hamburg, S.C., killing 5 **1835**- Liberty Bell cracks	**9** **1960**- Khrushchev threatens US with rockets for any attempt to oust Castro **1995** - French storm Rainbow Warrior II	**10** **1902**- Explosion kills 125 miners in Pennsylvania **1775**- Washington excludes blacks from Continental Army	**11** **1919**- Dutch adopts eight-hour work day **1995** - Spokane Co. Commissioner proposes roadside chain gangs
12 **1995** - Clinton says schools' religious activities ban is extreme **1996** - House passes "Defense of Marriage Act"	**13** **1787**- Congress excludes slavery from NW Territory **1997** - Bill Gates tops Forbes' list of billionaires	**14** **1798**- U.S. Congress passes the Sedition Act of 1798 **1996** - Woman is mauled by river otters near White Pass	**15** **1995** - Amy Myrfield and Charlie Nath, suffer abusive police tactics and arrested outside Thekla on trumped up charges	**16** **1996** - The Dow Jones fell 167 points (5,358.76) **1997** - The Dow Jones passes 8,000 mark, closing 8,038	**17** *full moon* ● **1997** - Damien Harris acquitted of first-degree murder **1997** - State Investment Board not to sell tobacco stocks	**18** **1997** - Judge upholds firing of state trooper who stopped a couple speeding, forcing them to anti-abortion counseling
19 **1919**- Beginning of 4 day long race riot in Washington, D.C. triggered by raids on black residential areas by white soldiers	**20** **1894**- Troops leave Chicago as power Pullman Strike is broken. It was one of the most bitter strikes in U.S. history.	**21** **1997** - WashPIRG places tombstone on Capitol steps for the 15,000 lives/yr that stronger air pollution limits could save	**22** **1931**- A Kansas tax moratorium is put into effect in Kansas to help the thousands of distressed farmers in the state	**23** **1900**- Canada closes doors to criminals, poor **1996** - Oly City plans hearing on sidewalk sitting ban	**24** **1997** - WA Supreme Court reverses a Pierce Co. ruling that struck down the state's ban on medicinal marijuana	**25** **1900**- New Orleans mob beats/kills blacks **1996** - AP source claims TWA Flight 800 black-box indicate abrupt end
26 **1953**- Cuban revolution begins against Batista **1918**- Wilson demands end to lynchings in United States	**27** **1994** - State trooper forces couple to anti-abortion counseling **1997** - Loretta Swit is Wolf Haven Nat'l Campaign Chair	**28** **1997** - Report in Archives of Internal Medicine: job-related injuries/illnesses cost nation far more than AIDS or Alzheimer's	**29** **1907**- IWW leader Big Bill Haywood acquitted on charges of conspiracy to murder Idaho Governor Steunenberg	**30** **1866**- One of the earliest riots takes place in New Orleans over proposals to grant black suffrage in the state legislature	**31** **1996** - Clinton announces that he will sign a welfare bill limiting assistance to families with dependent children	**War is only a cowardly escape from the problems of peace.** Thomas Mann

Along the Color Line

Day-To-Day Racism

Dr. Manning Marable

Several weeks ago, while at home on a Sunday afternoon, I suddenly became quite ill. I first experienced severe chills, and then a blazing fever. My wife Leith convinced me to lay down, and she took my temperature. When she saw that my temperature was 104 degrees and rising, she insisted that we go immediately to the emergency room at a nearby hospital.

In typical male gendered fashion, I argued against going to the hospital. All that was wrong was that I had simply a bad case of the flu. But Leith wouldn't take "no" for an answer. With the unique determination that black women possess, she forced me up and out the apartment door. We walked to the corner of Broadway and 120th Street in Manhattan, and stood at the corner to hail a taxicab going uptown.

The first empty yellow cab that came by started slowing down. But when the taxi driver saw that the individuals on the corner were African Americans, he stepped on the gas and drove passed us. A second taxi, closely following behind, did the same.

Meanwhile, my fever had increased, and it was more difficult for me to think clearly. My wife sensed all of this, and with greater urgency tried to get a taxi to stop.

In the next five minutes, four more taxicabs traveled uptown on Broadway, coming down the hill toward us. But all four stopped before reaching us, making U-turns in the center of the street, and then rapidly proceeding downtown in the opposite direction.

Finally, the seventh taxi came down the hill. The driver turned on his blinker, and slowed to a halt. Getting inside, we finally made our way to the hospital.

We later learned that I had come down with a severe bacterial infection, which had caused a fever reaching 105 degrees. My wife's decision to force me to go to the hospital probably had saved my life. After six days, I was well enough to return home.

I relate this personal story, because it represents to me the fundamental challenge for uprooting racism in American society. New York City has passed various local laws making it illegal for taxicabs to refuse to pick up people on the basis of race. It is illegal for taxi drivers to refuse to travel to specific neighborhoods in the city.

Uprooting these patterns of day-to-day racism, white privilege and black exclusion, will require more than a change of laws, but a revolution in values, resources and behaviors.

Nevertheless, in the real world of white racism, black people's lives are defined as expendable.

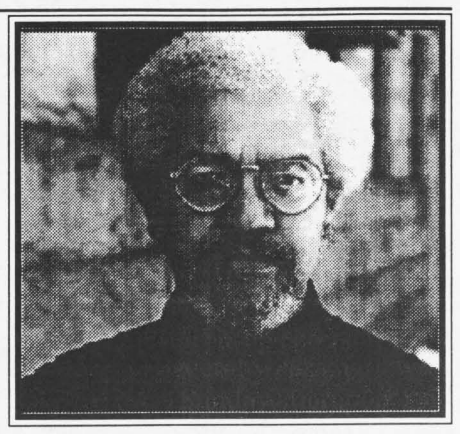
"Racism" is often thought of as the most vicious patterns of discrimination, such as lynching, police brutality, and the death penalty. Sometimes we think about racism as the overtly consequences of discrimination, such as political disenfranchisement and the denial of access to public accommodations, such as hotels and restaurants, during Jim Crow segregation.

But far more pervasive and pernicious is what might be termed "day-to-day racism", the thousands of acts of omission, avoidance and exclusion, in which black people lose out in all aspects of life and society. This pattern of discriminatory behaviors and practices may not have behind them the sanction of law, but are just as powerful as the overt racism of apartheid or the Jim Crow South of a generation ago. There are, in effect, two parallel racial universes within American society, in which blacks and whites may speak the same language, are theoretically governed by the same laws, but experience reality in fundamentally different ways.

In practical terms, day-to-day racism means that we die sooner on average, and in disproportionately higher numbers, than our white counterparts. Think about health care alone. How many black women and men who urgently require emergency hospitalization die unnecessarily because they don't have immediate access to transportation? How many black women will die in childbirth needlessly because of substandard health services or public health care in their communities? We know that during this year, about one half million Americans will go to emergency rooms in hospitals, and will be turned away because they lack medical insurance. When health care access is determined by profitability, poor people and racial minorities inevitably lose out.

Consider the racial discrimination in the capital markets, and how banks still rationalize and justify their "red lining" policies by refusing to make loans in African American neighborhoods. More than three-fourths of all black small entrepreneurs go out of business within five years or less, largely because they are undercapitalized from the very beginning.

Day-to-day racism can be measured by the cynical policies of tobacco and liquor corporations, who design slick advertising campaigns to attract younger black and Hispanic consumers. Day-to-day racism occurs when



public transportation systems assign obsolete, older buses and trains on majority-black routes, but place clean, modern transit on routes to the white suburbs.

The old segregation era signs reading "white" and "colored" have been gone for more than a generation. But the practices of white privilege and black exclusion still largely characterize the structure of American society. Uprooting these patterns of day-to-day racism will require more than a change of laws, but a revolution in values, resources and behaviors. Government is essential in finding solutions, but a more fundamental cultural transformation must occur in the relations of power. Anything short of that racial revolution will leave in place the policies and processes of racial inequality.

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After-Action Report:

Jesse Jackson at UPS

Dave Zink

The Reverend Jesse Jackson, founder of the National Rainbow Coalition, spoke to a crowd of about 400 at the University of Puget Sound Field House Saturday afternoon, June 13th. Three Tacoma-area organizations co-sponsored the event: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Pierce County, Pierce County Family Counseling Service, and BLACK (Black Leaders Actively Communicating Knowledge). These groups are working to help youth break the chains tying young people to drugs and gang violence.

This man is no ordinary politician. He is an incredibly inspiring, energizing, and exciting speaker that seeks to heal America.

The program preceding Jackson's talk included some great entertainment: stirring and uplifting music by area youth choirs, a Cambodian welcoming dance routine, an athletic step-dance ensemble, and poetry readings.

Reverend Jackson showed up a little late because he had just flown in from Jasper, Texas, a community reeling from the lynching of James Byrd. This man was not just dragged to death behind a pickup. He was beaten, tied behind the pickup, then dragged for 3 miles, scattering his arms, legs, and head across the Texas prairie. "Such despicable horror is beyond description" said Jackson.

Jackson's message was directed at the Youth. His speech included the following points:

Three things make you up: Color, Culture, and Character. You can't do anything about the first two, but you CAN do something about the third. As important as your culture is, Character is ABOVE color and culture.

It is crucial to inspire Hope among young people, because THAT is where positive change comes from. Whenever Young America comes alive, when Youth chooses hope over dope, chooses the High Road, then and ONLY then does America change for the better. The union organizing of the 30's, the Civil Rights and Peace struggles of the 60's are two examples.

How can we make the "American Dream" a reality ?

1. Equal protection under the Law. NOBODY should be afraid to walk the streets of America.

2. Equal opportunity and equal access. Affirmative Action is basically a conservative program to help those who have been locked out. The primary beneficiaries have been white women, not racial minorities.

He used the WNBA as an example. The Women's National Basketball Association was started as an Affirmative Action program - instead of ALL the money going to male sports teams, women should get some of that money. The WNBA doesn't hurt the NBA, nor take away any of its audience. But it DOES provide a way for talented and intelligent young women to go to college. 3. Concern for the least, the poorest, the most oppressed. Most poor people aren't on welfare. They work

(Continued next page)

On Front

Cold Juneteenth

Jerome Johnson

He was very friendly, outgoing to everyone. Everyone around here knew him. There was no ingrained hatred or anything like that.

-- Clara Taylor, Byrd's sister.

The incident that happened in Jasper could happen anywhere in the country, which is why we think that it's so important for more people to get involved in this dialogue on race and take the issue more seriously.

-- Lydia Sermons, spokeswoman
President's Race Initiative

19 June 1998 -- Juneteenth -- one of the oldest African American holidays, second only to Martin Luther King Jr. Day in reverence and importance. Usually, Juneteenth is eagerly anticipated in the African American community. At the beginning of summer, we celebrate because on 19 June 1865, the black people of Texas finally learned of the Emancipation Proclamation. Two months after the Confederacy surrendered, Texas blacks were released from the holocaust that was slavery. Normally Juneteenth is a time to go fishing with kinfolk, host family reunions, picnic in the sun. We share our culture, our history and heritage. It's normally a time for song, dance, storytelling/oral history, a time of food and fun and laughter.

19 June 1998 is not a normal Juneteenth for me. It's a cold Juneteenth, despite the balmy Washington weather. I'm cold because I am mourning James Byrd, Jr., 49, who was lynched two weeks ago by three white men in Jasper, Texas.

Racism and terrorism are an old story in this country, especially in the South, and East Texas is no exception.

So far, this is what I've learned:

Early on the morning of 7 June, between midnight and 2am, Byrd was walking home from a family gathering. He couldn't drive due to a permanent, work-related arm injury. He lived on a pension, and either walked or was given rides around the area. As one of his relatives noted, "Everything's pretty much in walking distance here...it's not like Houston or Beaumont." On the road he met Shawn Berry, John King, and Lawrence Breweer. Berry was driving his gray Ford pickup truck, and all three had been drinking heavily, according to Sheriff Billy Rowles. They saw Byrd walking, and, according to Berry's statement, knowing Byrd, pulled over and offered him a ride. I think Byrd accepted because he knew Berry -- they had the same parole officer. (Byrd had served six years for theft and forgery. At another time and facility, Berry met Brewer and King in prison while serving time for burglary and drug convictions.)

Byrd climbed into the bed of the pickup. According to *Newsweek*, "King became enraged. 'You don't need to be picking up a fucking nigger,'" he allegedly told Berry.

Berry drove to a nearby convenience store, I don't yet know why. According to press reports, King got the keys to the pickup from Berry -- again, just how isn't clear -- and drove to a wooded area to "scare" Byrd.

According to press reports, which cite Berry's statement, that's when King and Brewer hauled Byrd out of the truck and began a savage beating. Authorities believe Byrd was still alive when, again according to media reports of Berry's statement, they used Berry's tools to chain Byrd to the truck's rear bumper, then dragged him to death over a three mile stretch of road. It is unclear just how Byrd died, but he was beheaded and dismembered, his body parts and belongings scattered over the bloody road.

Seventy-five pieces of James Byrd, Jr. was recovered.

According to the media, Berry, Brewer and King had met in a Texas prison in 1995. Brewer and King were veteran white supremacists with ties to the Ku Klux Klan and the Aryan Brotherhood, and Berry is believed to have followed them. According to the media, both Brewer and King are "covered with racist tattoos," and the three share a Jasper apartment.

Time reports that "the local economy around Jasper is not good, and young white men there see minorities compete against them for jobs with what they perceive as unfair advantages, including affirmative action and other government programs." All three whites are young ex-cons -- Berry is 23, Brewer 31, King 23. It's entirely possible they saw Byrd as "faking a disability, getting over on welfare." While white guys like them couldn't keep a job and were unqualified for assistance. Due to drug convictions financial aid for education would be almost impossible to get due to Reagan-era policies still in effect, so even voc-tech school was probably out of their reach.

I think Berry, Brewer and King got drunk, got bummed, and got mean that Saturday night/Sunday morning. I think King and Brewer lynched James Byrd.

I'm still not sure about Berry's role. My first question is: How did King get the keys from him?

Racism and terrorism are an old story in this country, especially in the South, and East Texas is no exception. East Texas has been a Klan stronghold since 1865, when it became a refuge for old Confederates. Then-Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros sent National Guardsmen and US Marshals to nearby Vidor, in 1993, to enforce an unsuccessful effort to integrate Federal housing.

Today, the Imperial Wizard of the Texas Knights of the Ku Klux Klan maintains his headquarters in Vidor. Openly.

Today, Beaumont remains in the grip of the Klan. A good friend of mine who spent her summer vacation in Beaumont, scarcely fifteen years ago. She's an attractive white woman, blonde. She shudders at the mention of Beaumont. "I won't go back there."

And yet, most interesting are the messages of love and reconciliation coming from everyone in Jasper. The whole community shut down for a week. Yellow ribbons are everywhere to remember Byrd. Businesses showed signs: CLOSED IN HONOR OF JAMES BYRD. Ministers helped their congregations reach out to one another in a spirit of healing. According to *Time*, Ronald King, John's father, wrote to a local TV station. "It hurts me deeply to know that a boy I raised...could find it in himself to take a life. The deed cannot be undone but I hope we can all find it in our hearts to go forward in peace and with love for all."

According to the *Dallas Morning News*, white resident Andrea Tatum, 31, offered "deep, heartbreaking feeling toward the family and toward the blacks of this town. I am deeply, personally sorry that this happened."

*****

When I first heard about this hideous murder, I was enraged, saddened, scared. Once again, the icy fist of racism had reached out and grabbed me in the gut. I passed through rage, into fear, to resolution now.

When I heard about Byrd's lynching, I thought: *O God, not yet again.*

Then: *Thank God, it isn't Mother or any of my loved ones.*

Last: *What if it'd been me?*

As heinous as their alleged crime, I don't want Berry, Brewer and King to get the death penalty. Three wrongs won't make a right.

Yet, I confess to a fierce interest in how this case is prosecuted, as well as covered in the media. I sure as hell know how it would be handled if three drunk Black Panthers had beaten a 49-year-old disabled white man and dragged him to death over 3 miles, with a pickup truck, dismembering him in the process -- especially in Texas.

*****

On the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, people die in senseless fighting.

In the Middle East, Newt Gingrich jeopardizes a fragile peace process to further his own ruthless political agenda.

In Jasper, a community moves toward healing.

And in Olympia, on a sunny Juneteenth, a chilly breeze rustles through branches of the tall evergreens. Some of us rub our arms and shoulders, as if we can feel it all the way from Texas. •

(Jackson, continued)

every day. At fast-food restaurants, as temps without unions or benefits, they are working EVERY DAY. NOBODY should be left behind .

4. Instead of pouring all the money into prison-building and "3 Strikes and You're Out", how about putting some funding into a "Four Balls and You're Home" approach? It would be a net SAVINGS to the taxpayers of America.

- Ball one: Head Start and pre-school programs - Ball two: Decent public schools - Ball three: College and real-world job training - Ball four: a good job.

If we truly want to lower the crime rate, we need to adopt this approach. "Three Strikes, You're Out" is NOT working to reduce the crime rate.

At several points in his talk, he led the crowd in some uplifting chants like:

Hope, not Dope! I AM Somebody! Strong Minds and Strong Morals break strong Chains!

Racism makes no sense, Jackson said. He talked about the Los Angeles riots. It was a white man who filmed the cops beating Rodney King and knew - maybe from something his Mom or Dad taught him, that this just wasn't right. He could have said that it wasn't any of his business. But, even though it would have been safer just to keep quiet, this man took a risk and went public.

A riot ensued when an all-white jury acquitted Rodney King's attackers. A few black kids didn't just stand by and watch while some other black kids were beating up a white truck driver. Putting themselves at risk, they rescued the white man, and took him to the emergency room of a hospital where he was treated by a black doctor - who had his job due to Affirmative Action!

As Reverend Jackson concluded his speech, he received a roof-raising standing ovation. This man is no ordinary politician. He is an incredibly inspiring, energizing, and exciting speaker that seeks to heal America. If you ever get the chance to hear him, do so! •

Building Bridges Toward True Coalitions:
Reviews of Two Boundary-Crossing, Bridge-Making Books

Wendy C. Ortiz

Seeing A Color-Blind Future: The Paradox of Race by Patricia J. Williams, The Noonday Press, 1997 and _Abortion Wars: A Half Century of Struggle 1950-2000_ edited by Rickie Solinger, University of California Press, 1998.

It was one month shy of a year ago that I first put out the word in these pages: where are the women of color in Olympia? I am proud to say that some very courageous, wonderful women answered my call months later, and we had breakfast and discussed activism and the myriad ways we can be in a society that seeks to silence us, or erase us altogether.

In my involvement with the Olympia Coalition for Equal Opportunity and our efforts to defeat the anti-affirmative action I-200 (coming to your ballot in November), I have attempted to delve deeper into the issue of affirmative action: beyond the anecdotes, beyond the usual rhetoric that works to divide us, even when we supposedly agree on issues such as civil rights.

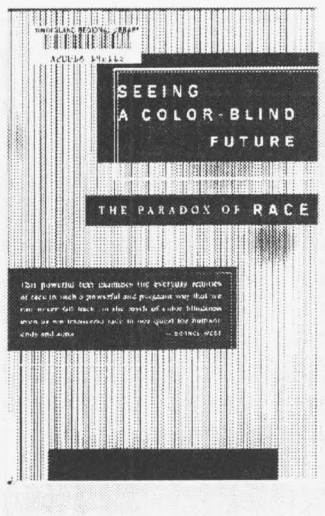
John Carlson and Representative Scott Smith, the backers of I-200, assert that they seek a "color-blind" world. They have co-opted the language of the civil rights movement when they assert that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would back their initiative because he himself wished for a day when people would no longer be judged by the color of their skin, but by their character. Thousands of heads nod in unison.

"...[I]t is a dangerous if comprehensible temptation to imagine inclusiveness by imagining away any obstacles," Patricia J. Williams counters in her slim book of essays. Columnist and professor of law, Williams treads heavily on the current arguments surrounding the absolutely related issues of the current attacks on affirmative action, the defining of race in the "market of worth," "racial science" brought to you by the white-men-in-charge, and the oft-aspired American dream of "color-blindness"—or erasure of differences.

"How precisely does the issue of color remain so powerfully determinative of everything from life circumstances to manner of death, in a world that is, by and large, officially 'color-blind'?" Williams asks this question consistently and urgently throughout her essays in both academic and what I like to call a "nouveau-anecdotal" form; anecdotes that counter the common, if overused anecdote of 'my (white) brother's (white) friend who did not get the job because of affirmative action, so a (unqualified) black/Latino/female got the job *instead*.' Williams' anecdotes, though depressing, are eye-opening, politically and emotionally charged, as well as inspiring to the activist-minded. She opens the book by describing her kindergarten-aged son's "color-blindness," as diagnosed by his teachers. In fact, her son could see colors, but was encouraged to believe that color does not matter, "it makes no difference." It is with this anecdote that she successfully defines the danger in the liberal notion of color-blindness. Blindness of color, is in fact, denial. That we should not see skin color in a world that is so race-coded is disrespectful of and insulting to our intelligence as conscious people. But, as Williams points out, "...the new rhetoric of racism never mentions race" while "the hierarchies of color are so insistently built into the habits of our language." Take the past and current debate of welfare "reform": the mainstream media has done more than its part of characterizing the recipients of welfare as "(black) welfare queens"—a distortion of the racial makeup of welfare recipients, which also ignores class as a whole.

In subsequent anecdotes (and I have never used the term 'anecdote' so positively before), Williams describes the colonialistic voyeurism of tourists in their visits to Black churches in Harlem; the witnessing of class prejudice of a feminist in her ferocious scolding of a homeless man that called her "little lady" in (*how could it happen here?!*) Berkeley, California; and her own experience obtaining a mortgage on a home in a white neighborhood by telephone, only to find that after correcting the little box for race (changing it from "white" to "black") on her mortgage application, the bank suddenly wanted more money down, more payment in points, and a hike in interest rate. Hmmm...color-blindness at work, no doubt?

We have not come to that place of ability to regard the world in a color-blind way, and doing so does not deal with the inequities that occur due to color. Parallel to the issue of "color-blindness" is the notion that "racism has no solution." In this method of reasoning, we must try to be blind to color because, well, racism just exists and there's nothing we can do about it. Williams notes the message on her teabag: "It's easy to be tolerant when you do not care." Williams replies powerfully, more than a few times, the sentiment that "(the solution)...lies in the collective and institutional power to make change." I couldn't have said it better myself.



Race is an issue that figures heavily in the volume *Abortion Wars: A Half Century of Struggle 1950-2000*. Along with class, disability, and other issues, this book of essays covers more than the general notion of "pro-choice." In fact, the term of usage throughout most of the essays, or in the introductions to each section, is "pro-rights," which exhibits the understanding that "choice" has often been reflected as a white middle-class term, while "rights" is one that is more inclusive of all women and reproductive rights specifically.

This academic book is separated into four parts: 'Coercion, Resistance, and Liberation Before Roe v. Wade,' 'Strategic Arenas,' 'Activism,' Physicians and the Politics of Provision,' and 'Reinterpreting Abortion Rights Over Time.' As proposed anti-choice Initiative 694 makes its mark on the state, we must again combat the religious right in their efforts to dismantle abortion rights piece by piece. Part of defending abortion rights, aside from activism, is to understand the history of abortion rights and the past challenges women have faced in order to understand and work against similar and present challenges.

I-694 uses deceptive rhetoric much as I-200 does. Anti-choice 694 has been called the "ban on partial-birth abortion" and equates abortion with "killing infant children." In fact, the wording of the initiative seeks to actually redefine already legally established wording in order to define abortion so vaguely that almost any procedure could be banned, as reported by the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. Similar law was proposed and passed in the state of Wisconsin, bringing to a halt all abortion services in that state for approximately four days. This is exactly the intent of religious and conservative groups that seek to limit access to abortion, with the ultimate goal of banning all abortions, hence banning one facet of womens' reproductive rights.

Throughout this book, several authors reiterate the fact that there are contradictions, differing motives, and boundless issues at stake in the abortion debate. This is one reason why I found this book to be fascinating and challenging in its scope. The primary objective of these essays is not to preach to a choir, but in fact to address and attempt to understand the differences of each member of the choir. For instance, some activists are motivated by concern for unwanted children or unplanned motherhood; others are concerned about the increasing power of religious fundamentalist beliefs on society at large; some care specifically that women simply have choice. While we are in favor of abortion rights, we can also expand our way of looking at the issue and making it a more inclusive one.

"Punishing Drug Addicts with Babies" by Dorothy E. Roberts is one example that ties race, gender and class into the abortion and reproductive rights arenas. By making the connection between punishing poor drug-addicted women, who may also be women of color, and the criminalization of prenatal conduct, we are allowed to see beyond notions of "choice." Poor women and women of color, while legally able to practice "choice" often face the obstacle of access. We can choose to have an abortion, but can we afford them, and who in my area will perform this procedure? Additionally, there is the debate among communities of color, though historically Black, that abortion is a form of genocide and should not be condoned. Loretta J. Ross gives an outstanding history of African-American women's activism that explains the struggles within the Black community to return and maintain the rights of reproduction to the women, whose lives would be most affected by them. And in this context, anti-rights politicians have tried to twist the truth. As noted by Warren M. Hern in his essay entitled "Life on the Front Lines," Pat Robertson has gone on record making the ridiculous accusation that Planned Parenthood tried to create a "master race" by providing abortion services. In an obviously deceptive appeal, he has tried to manipulate the issue in order to garner support for what is essentially anti-rights. I believe this is on the same level as the deception used by the backers of I-200, who claim that they only want to see everyone treated equally, therefore we must do away with affirmative action. Again, a twist on the truth, while heads nod in blank unison.

(Continued next page)

I-694 uses deceptive rhetoric much as I-200 does...anti-rights politicians have tried to twist the truth.

694

DECLINE TO SIGN!

STOP THE ANTI-CHOICE INITIATIVE

694

Initiative 694 is the religious extremists' latest effort to ban women's right to choose safe and legal abortion. This inflammatory initiative was filed by a personal friend and supporter of Ellen Craswell, former candidate for governor who wanted to bring the Bible back into state government. The Christian Coalition and religious conservative members of the Republican Party support this initiative. Having failed to restrict abortion through the legislative process, anti-choice zealots are now attempting to do so through the initiative process.

At Washington NARAL, we believe our current law works.

- ✓ Private medical decisions should be made by women and their doctors.
- ✓ Women's health should not be endangered by banning specific medical procedures.
- ✓ Physicians should not be imprisoned for providing health care to women.
- ✓ I-694 violates the core principles of *Roe v. Wade* and Initiative 120, Washington State's law passed in 1991 assuring safe, legal abortions for women.

Washington NARAL, 811 First Avenue, Suite 456, Seattle, WA 98104, (206) 624-1990, wanaral@earthlink.net

(Bridges, continued)

There are also clear-cut histories of such anti-rights groups as Operation Rescue, and the violence that has escalated in this country that coincided with religious, conservative men being voted into office. Besides the stigmatization of women who seek abortion services, there is also a history of attack on the providers themselves. Through a specific and disturbing psychology promoted by the religious right, abortionists and clinic workers have been vilified, harassed, and even murdered. These acts have done considerable damage to the network of abortion services, often in ways we are not aware of: providers have become scarce, and the new generation of medical students are not even taught abortion in medical school, or must fight to obtain this kind of knowledge, as the group Medical Students for Choice has done.

Also included in this volume are essays dealing with disability issues, such as the "eugenic abortion" debate. Reproductive rights are described within a disability context, which I found to be an asset in a volume of such diverse opinions of how and why we should be pro-reproductive rights. Often the defenders of choice are not as outspoken about choice as it applies to the disabled community, and this has caused divisions between reproductive rights and disabled rights groups. Marsha Saxton outlines "A Proposal for the Reproductive Rights Movement" that focuses on the issue of selective abortion, and increases the understanding of the need there is in making sure that disabled women are at the table when discussing reproductive rights.

As I compose these book reviews in the hopes of stimulating readers to likewise pick these books up at their local library, two men in a basement in Raleigh, North Carolina are distributing a new and dangerous sterilization drug, Quinacrine, to women in the Third World. Their hope: "to curb population growth and limit the flow of immigrants to the United States." The reality: More than 100,000 poor women have been irreversibly sterilized, with an increase in possibilities of damage to womens' reproductive organs, and a rise in the risk of cancer. In the United States, the controversial contraception Norplant has been used as condition for parole on an African-American woman in California. "Choice" must expand its vision to include *rights* for everyone. As Loretta J. Ross concludes, "Perfect choice must involve access not only to abortion services but also to prenatal care, quality sex education, contraceptives, maternal infant and child health services, housing, and reform of the health care delivery system." These issues are issues of basic human rights, much as the right to obtain housing and employment are issues of basic rights. All of these rights are certain to disappear (or never occur) if we don't view them holistically. All of these rights are being aggressively taken away from the majority of the people in this country, and it may be too late before we realize the harsh consequences for our neighbors, our loved ones and ourselves.

To contact the Olympia Coalition for Equal Opportunity call 360/943-7469. To contact Clinic Defense call Washington NARAL at 206/ 624-1990 or at 811 First Avenue, Suite 456, Seattle, WA 98104.•

Review: *The Best Government That Money Can Buy*

Dan Pens

Are you one of the fewer than half of eligible voters who cast a ballot in the 1996 presidential election? Are you among the more than ninety-nine percent of U.S. citizens who donated less than $200 to a congressional candidate during the 1996 election cycle? If you answered "yes" to either of these questions, there is a book that you *must* read: *Washington on $10 Million A Day*, Ken Silverstein (Common Courage Press, 1998).

In these superbly researched, fact-crammed, rocketing and rolling, and utterly engaging 240 pages, Silverstein exposes the seamy underbelly of the Washington D.C. "K Street Corrido" lobbying industry. True to the motto of *Counterpunch*, an investigative newsletter co-edited by Silverstein and Alexander Cockburn, this book "gives the facts and names the names." And what facts!

No doubt you have heard the shrill cries of campaign finance reformers who declare that corporate campaign contributions are distorting—and some say destroying—democracy. Well, that's more bad news. The *worse* news is that most corporations spend far more on lobbying.

'Dollar for dollar," writes Silverstein in the book's introduction, "lobbying is a far better investment than campaign contributions...In 1996, Philip Morris coughed up $19.6 million for lobbying programs versus $4.2 million for campaign contributions (making it the leader in both categories). The same pattern holds true for other firms. For 1996, Georgia Pacific spent $8.9 million for lobbying and handed out $527,000 in political money. Corresponding figures for AT&T are $8.4 million versus $1.8 million; for Pfizer [a pharmaceutical maker], $8.3 million versus $775,000; for Boeing, $5.2 million versus $770,000; for ARCO, $4.3 million versus $1.3 million, for Lockheed, $3.5 million versus $1.26 million; for Fedex, $3.1 million versus $1.9 million, for Dow Chemical, $1.5 million versus $578,000."

The above passage illustrates one thing about this book that makes for some tough reading: the names, facts, and dollar figures flow so thick in places that the mind tends to glaze over unless you concentrate on the material. Several times I found myself halfway down a page realizing that I comprehended exactly zero of the preceding paragraph and had to go back and read it over. However, it's difficult to consign this to a flaw in Silverstein's writing. For, as the above passage also illustrates, when money talks it speaks in the arcane language of dollar signs, digits, and lots of zeros. And when it's corporate money, and it speaks in 6- and 7- figures...well...the rest of the book amply demonstrates how the combined voices of corporate lobbyists, public relations firms, and fake "grassroots" campaigns all but drown out the relatively tiny voice of "The People" in late-twentieth century U.S.-style democrazy.

The book amply demonstrates how the combined voices of corporate lobbyists, public relations firms, and fake "grassroots" campaigns all but drown out the relatively tiny voice of "The People" in late-twentieth century U.S.-style democrazy.

Travel with Ken Silverstein as he dons the persona (complete with faked credentials) of a lobbyist/bagman for the mythical Miami-based United Broadcasting Corporation and sets out to plug into the beltway influence-peddling circuit. "Armed with my impressive credentials as a lobbyist for this cash-dispensing outfit, I called the offices of Democratic and Republican Party fundraising outfits and asked for information about upcoming affairs in Washington."

He writes about feeling nervous as he made the calls and feared being unmasked if party staffers asked detailed questions about UBC's operations. But staffers from both political parties asked few questions and happily faxed him a list of that week's 68 fundraising events, including a $500 per person "Wine Reception" for second-term Congressman George Radanovich (R) of California, and a $500 per person elbow-rubbing and gladhanding affair for Texas Democrat Ken Bentsen. There were other, pricier, buffets, luncheons, and cocktail parties, but Silverstein attended just these two.

Again, he feared probing questions that would unmask his flimsy cover. Yet at both affairs he was warmly and personally greeted by the pols and their helpful staffers who offered to set up future meetings with United Broadcasting officials to discuss the company's concerns.

Read about the revolving door between the capitol's halls of power and the denizens of Washington's hundreds of lobby and PR firms. There are an estimated 40,000 to 80,000 lobbyists in Washington D.C. They outnumber congress by 75-1, even if you accept the lower figure. Between 19888 and 1993, 42 percent of all permanent Senate committee and staff directors became lobbyists, while the corresponding figure on the House side was 34 percent.

But rather than simply throw facts and figures around in a superficial overview, Silverstein dishes up numerous play-by-play analyses of how specific players trade on relationships, call in favors, pay for phony academic studies and think tank reports and manipulate public officials to score goals for their corporate teams.

One illustrative example Silverstein serves up is Procter & Gamble's "lushly funded campaign to obtain Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for the fat substitute called olestra." In just eight fact-and name-crammed pages, Silverstein details P&G's impressive master plan to buy up made-to-order scientific research, crush contrary studies made by academics and scientists not on their payroll, deftly manage press coverage (it helps that the company is one of the largest advertisers in the nation), silence and marginalize consumer opposition groups, and marshal an army of high-profile hired guns to descend on the FDA approval hearings.

Washington On $10 Million A Day offers a virtual blueprint of the who, how, why and what gets done in Washington. If this is a process you would like to witness firsthand, come along with Silverstein on this hair-raising tour of the beltway.

If, however, you are one of those people who loves to eat sausage but are too squeamish to examine the ingredients label...you may not have the stomach for this book.

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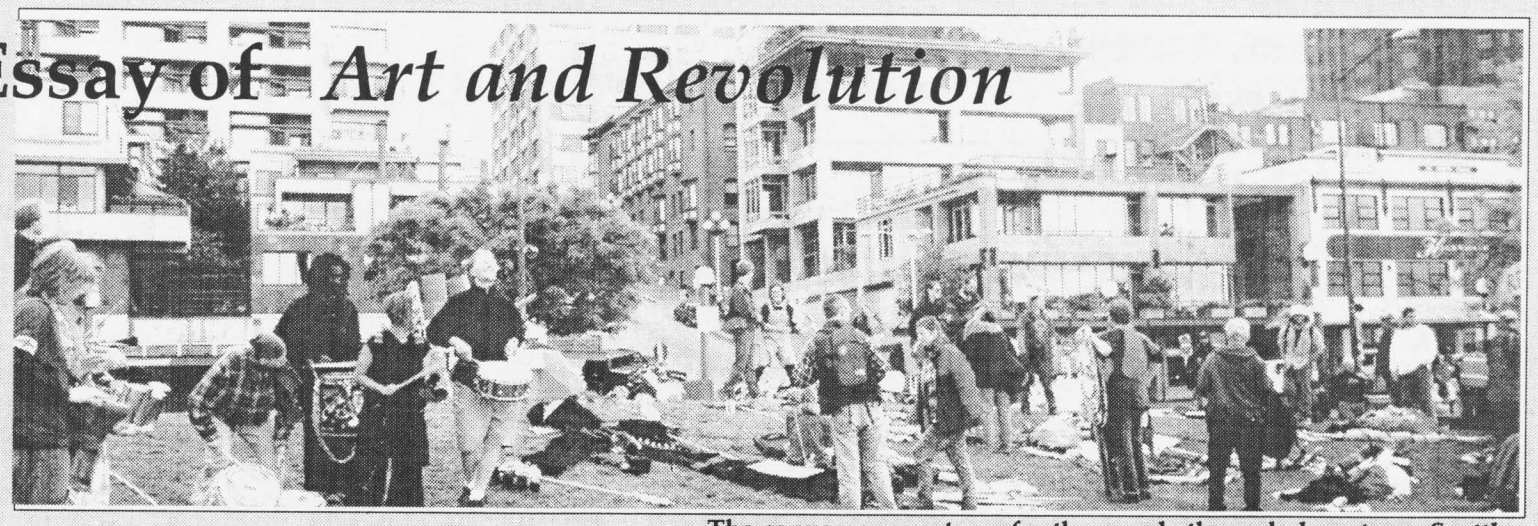
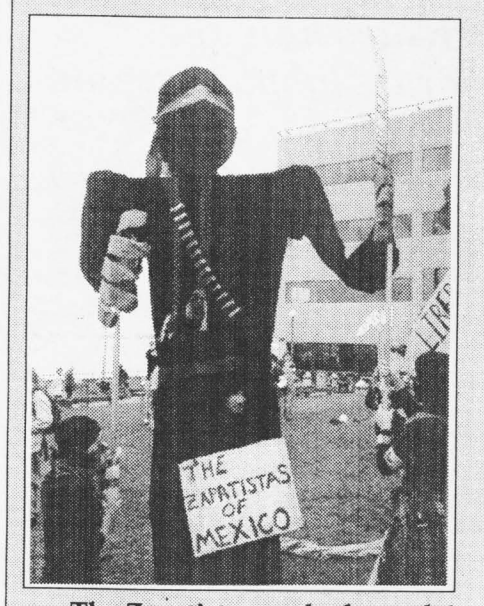
Photo Essay of *Art and Revolution*

On May 15th to 18th, the Cascadia Art and Revolution had its annual convergence - a weekend of puppets, dancing, drumming, theater, and good people. The following pictures are the outcome. A Monday action and parade and street-takeover in downtown Seattle.

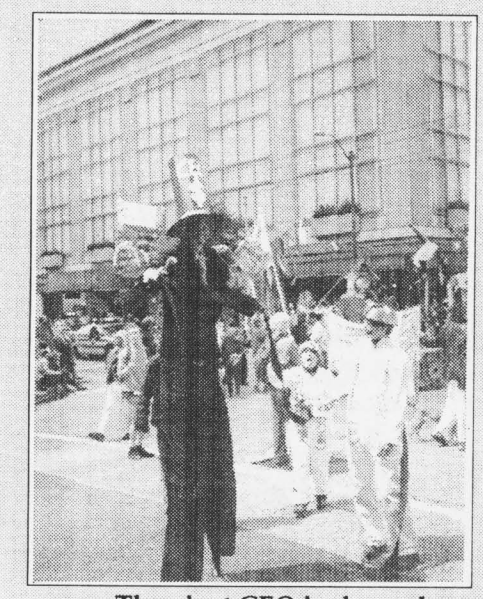
Adam



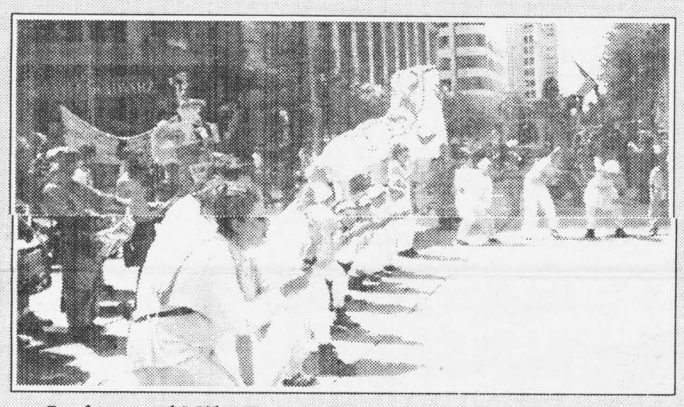
The convergence sets up for the parade through downtown Seattle. As the crowd grows, so does our puppets and excitement



The Zapatista sure looks ready!



The giant CEO is shown here explaining how business works.



In front of NikeTown: Here's how Nike employees look after a good days work.

Also NikeTown: More back-breaking employees with a few of our puppets watching over them.

"How can we control our over-consumption?"

Excuse me,
Could I have a moment of you time?
It won't take long.

Though be aware time grows,
and meaning changes
Cuz it's all about change.
It's all about the power,
which lays in our minds,
and on our tongues.

It starts with a spark,
and soon a fire lives.

I know a fire.
I know a fire within.
I have seen fire all around.

Fire happened Monday May 18, 1998.

Oh, this ain't just a small-contained-campfire.
This one had days of building
You should've seen it.

It knows how to dance,
and move to
beat of drums.
It knows how to shout out,
and sing to the
soul of our existence.

This fire took to the streets of Seattle,
and sparked learning in the minds of passers-by.

This fire worked, laughed,
and pressed through preparation.
Movin' in circles, passing the knowledge of
lovin' and livin' a free space in time.

This fire I have seen exhilarates for
theatrical sharing,
and retires
from exhaustion
Yet only to surprise
and shine with excitement for the happenings next.

Oh you should've seen it.
it moved ten feet tall
swaying
and lurking around the corner
dressed in shoes of an ill kind
and covered in black...Black the Zapatista way
in shouted out
"Work, buy, consume, die."
And the people heard.
The people shouted,
and they joined in for the dance

The invitations were handed out,
and the people...they came.
They took curiosity in where
when
why the fire existed.

They loved it,
and learned from it.

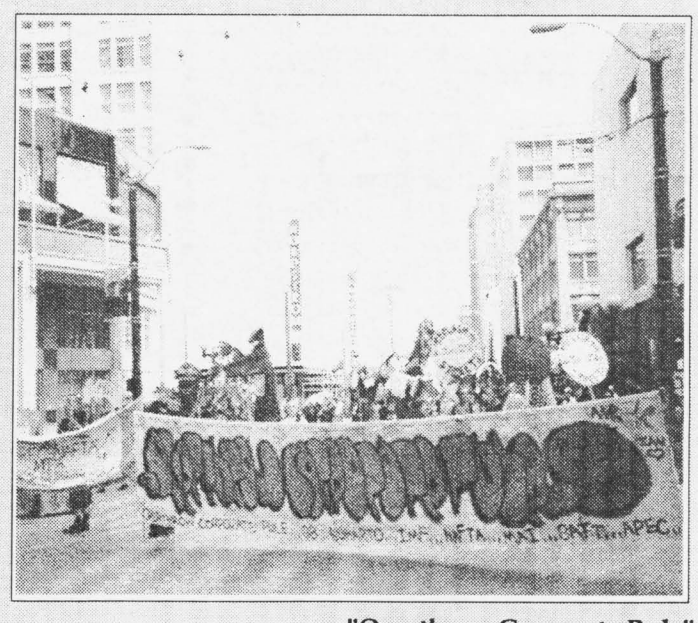
And let me tell ya,
sparks flew like mad,
and each person walkin' - ridin' -
drivin' - bussin' - by caught an ember,
nestled in their hands,
and minds.
Given the proper amount of care,
each ember can turn into a...small contained fire.
Yet once you let 'em go, they can become,
burnin' masses of beauty.

So watch out,
Cuz those embers are all around.
Be careful,
You might find one nestled in
your own hand.

H.E.M.

If you ever take over a street and throw a party, this makes a very good blockade.

Liberation for Seattle



"Overthrow Corporate Rule"

Department of Justice Negligent in Enforcing Disability Rights

by Lucy Gwin

The Department of Justice has been completely delinquent in its enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Congress passed the ADA in 1990. The Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division directs a Disability Rights Section, which is charged with enforcing the law.

But during the six years it has enforced the ADA, the DOJ has taken only one ADA case all the way to trial and judgment. You read that right: one case in six years.

But during the six years it has enforced the ADA, the section has taken only one ADA case all the way to trial and judgment. You read that right: one case in six years.

A 1997 Census Bureau update put the number of Americans with disabilities at 53 million. The General Accounting Office estimated in 1993 that more than 65 percent of the public places it surveyed effectively lock us out. According to the ADA, this is segregation. One ADA case in six years doesn't put a scratch on the wall that segregates so many from so much.

The ADA promised to end our segregation and open America's doors. But that promise became a lie when the Justice Department balked at its enforcement.

Has the Disability Rights Section suffered budget cuts? It has not. Disability Rights is the biggest section in the Civil Rights Division. Its budget has doubled and redoubled and stands at $9.3 million today. As many as 85 people serve on the section, more than 30 of them attorneys — trial attorneys.

As if ineffectual management were not enough, there's the department's hypocrisy. The Disability Rights Section is itself inaccessible to employees with disabilities. A recently retired investigator in that section, a wheelchair user, told us, "If they actually enforced the ADA, they'd have to sue themselves first."

In 1997, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission ranked the Department of Justice 48th among 49 federal agencies in the civilian employment of people with significant disabilities. Only one of the 15 managers of the Disability Rights Section has a disability. Would it be possible for an almost all-white department to enforce the civil rights of racial minorities?

The Justice Department is simply not doing its job. About 2.5 million Americans are locked up in nursing homes and other institutions for the crime of disability. The ADA calls that segregation. Yet the Disability Rights Section has not filed a single suit to free even one person from that handicaptivity. Perhaps the Department of Justice shares the standard prejudice that the disabled are "better off with special people of their own kind."

If so, let them hear this: We are not special, and we do not want a single special thing. We just want what you've got. We want to ride your bus, attend your school, shop where you shop, work where you work, move in next door to you.

Often I am told to be patient. Tell that to someone who's searched both sides of six city blocks for an accessible bathroom.

You've probably noticed lots of accessible bathrooms. We notice when they're nowhere to be found.

You might notice when there's a sign language interpreter at the front of the room. We notice when there's not.

Everyone notices when a bus lift lowers to bring one of us aboard. We notice — believe me, we notice — when an inaccessible bus passes us by.

The ADA is passing us by right now.

Lucy Gwin is editor of Mouth: Voice of the Disability Nation, winner of a 1996 Alternative Press Award. Headquartered in Rochester, N.Y., Mouth recently completed a five-month investigation of the Justice Department's enforcement of the ADA. Copyright 1998, Lucy Gwin. •

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ACLU Applauds Supreme Court Ruling Protecting Disabled Prisoners

Richard C. Dieter

WASHINGTON -- The American Civil Liberties Union today applauded a Supreme Court decision upholding the right of disabled prisoners to toilets, showers and other essential facilities and services within prison.

In a unanimous opinion written by Justice Antonin Scalia, the Court held that state prisons are a "public entity" and therefore must comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ACLU's National Prison Project submitted a friend-of-the-court brief in the case.

Marjorie Rifkin, a Staff Attorney with the ACLU's National Prison Project and author of the ACLU brief on behalf of the prisoner Ronald Yeskey, said the Court's decision was of great importance to disabled prisoners.

"The ADA does not give disabled prisoners special privileges, merely equal access to the most basic facilities and services," she said. "Prisons are required to make reasonable modifications that do not impose undue financial burdens on the state."

The state of Pennsylvania, joined by 36 other states, had tried to convince the Court that prisons were outside the coverage of the ADA and The state of Pennsylvania, joined by 36 other states, had tried to convince the Court that prisons were outside the coverage of the ADA and therefore no special measures were required to accommodate disabled prisoners. The nine justices unequivocally dismissed their claim, saying that "the statute's language unmistakably includes State prisons and prisoners within its coverage."

The Court, however, did not address the question of whether applying the disabilities law to state prisons overstepped Congress' authority to regulate interstate commerce, saying that the issue had not been raised by the lower courts.

As a result of today's decision, Rifkin said, the National Prison Project will go back to federal court to pursue the claims of disabled prisoners in Maryland who have fallen when shifting from their wheelchairs to toilets, defecated on themselves in public program areas including schools and chapels, and risked falls and serious injury in showers where they cannot stand or adequately control water temperature.

Disabled men and women in prisons and jails throughout the country often face dangerous physical obstacles when seeking access to facilities and services such as toilets and showers, dining halls, medical clinics, emergency alarms and exits, and rehabilitative programs.

For example, a semi-quadriplegic prisoner in an Indiana county jail who was confined to a wheelchair and wore colostomy and urostomy bags for removal of his body waste was kept in a jail cell with no running water. He was forced to use an open drain in the floor to dispose of the contents of his bags for three months although other jail cells with running water were available.

In a Michigan jail, a bilateral amputee fell into a toilet and onto the floor next to it when he attempted to transfer from his wheelchair because the toilet lacked both handrails and a seat and was set into a narrow stall into which he could not maneuver his wheelchair. A 65-year old wheelchair-bound prisoner with cancer and coronary problems had to forego his medications because Michigan prison staff refused to allow other prisoners to push his wheelchair and he lacked the energy to propel himself to the clinic.

The case is Pennsylvania Department of Corrections v. Yeskey, No. 97-634. The ruling upholds a federal appeals court decision that let Yeskey sue Pennsylvania prison authorities over their refusal to enroll him in a boot camp program. Prison officials had refused to put Yeskey in the program because he had high blood pressure. He sued in 1994, seeking admission to the program and financial damages.

The National Prison Project is a special project of the American Civil Liberties Union dedicated to improving prison conditions and upholding the constitutional rights of prisoners confined in American jails and prisons. Since it was founded in 1972, the NPP has had a significant impact on remedying unconstitutional conditions of confinement by working to reduce prison overcrowding, improve medical care and environmental conditions, and limit the excessive use of force. •

Disabled men and women in prisons and jails throughout the country often face dangerous physical obstacles when seeking access to facilities and services such as toilets and showers, dining halls, medical clinics, emergency alarms and exits, and rehabilitative programs.

W.I.P. seeks articles, artwork (black and white is best) from those in prison. Please send submissions to:
Works In Progress
PO Box 295
Olympia WA 98507-0295

William P. Clements, Jr Unit, Amarillo, TX

Books to Prisoners July Events

- Open drop in work/training sessions every Thurs. 3-9 pm above Bulldog News, 116 E. 4th, Olympia. *Training takes about 1 hour. Once you are trained you can work anytime Bulldog is open.*
- **BTP Volunteer Potluck** - 3rd Sun. of the month (July 18th), 3 pm at Liberation Cafe 116 E. 4th Ave, Oly.
- Turn in Bayview and Ralph's grocery receipts! (dated Oct 97 to present) B to P receives 1%. Please send to the address below.
- ***Thank you to all who submitted receipts!***
- **Save the UPC code from Western Family Products** and send to B to P, 116 E 4th Ave, Olympia, WA 98501

Your Help Is Needed

Because of the huge number of letters Books for Prisoners-Olympia Support Group receives each month and its limited resources, requests often wait many months to be filled. Thousands of letters still remain in boxes. Your help and generousity are urgently needed.

If we desire individuals in this country's prisons to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic, then we too need to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic. We need to "walk the talk." Please donate your time, money or books.

In greatest demand are:

English, Spanish/English, Southeast Asian dictionaries, thesaurus, new almanaces, and GED books.

Frequently requested are:

African-American, Chicano/Latino, and Native American history and progressive U.S. history.

Please donate:

- Any other good books
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- Money for tape, wrapping paper, copying

Please bring donations of books to the Books to Prisoner-Olympia office at the Liberation Cafe at Bulldog News.

Please make checks payable to **Books to Prisoners.**

Address: Books to Prisoners c/o Liberation Cafe, 116 4th Ave, Olympia WA 98501

Telephone: (360) 352-7336

Inmates — All correspondence to Books to Prisoners *must* go through the main branch:
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Briefs, continued

1005 5th Ave SW, Olympia

Come and join a growing organization to provide a valuable service.

The Community Bazaar

The Summer Community Bazaar will publicly celebrate the success of our local currency. Sound Exchange brings together a potpourri of goods and services in Sylvester Park on July 25th. More than 50 vendors will be displaying their crafts, portfolios, goods, etc. You'll have an opportunity to explore this microcosm of your community with the pleasant background of live music, jugglers, great food and fun for the kids. This event is free and open to the general public. Federal Reserve notes will be accepted by most participants. However, becoming a member and using the new currency will be an enticing opportunity at the Bazaar because the $10 membership fee is immediately rewarded with a grant of 4 Sound HOURS, (which is the equivalent of $40) plus two listings in the HOUR Town directory. So you can start spending your new currency right away.

Who else is using Sound HOURS? Look for the sign "We Proudly Accept Sound HOURS" in the window of places you shop. If you don't see it, ask anyway. Many new businesses are coming on board. See you at the Bazaar!

Spearhead Benefit Concert

The City Limits and the Sound Exchange in cooperation with WOMAD USA present a Benefit Concert with Spearhead and special guest Sandman at the Capitol Theater on August 1. The very exciting and socially active band, Spearhead, has offered to play for our community for free! They are supporters of local currency and have offered to play for the admission ticket of One Sound HOUR ($10). All the HOURS generated by the event will be donated to the organizations who help to host the event. If your organization would like to be involved we only need information about your group to include in our concert program. If you can contribute money to help pay for the musicians' hotel rooms, your compensation in HOURS will be even greater. Don't have any Sound HOURS? You can join the Sound Exchange at the Summer Bazaar or buy an HOUR from the Food Co-ops for $10. For more information contact Gail Sullivan at gail@olywa.net or 705-2527.

FIST This Summer!

Adult Women's Weekend: August 15 & 16 from 10am to 5pm. This class will cover the whole range of Feminists in Self-Defense Training course topcs such as intuition, vocal and physical skills, ground fighting, weapons of opportunity, and strategizing. Thee fee for this class ranges from $0 to $35 per person on a sliding scale basis, no one is ever turned away due to their inability to pay. For more information please call the FIST business line at 360/438-0288 and leave a message.

Moving Motorcade and Rally Against I-200

The African American Coalition for Equity (AACE) is sponsoring the Washington state moving motorcade and rally against Initiative 200

A coalition of organizations opposed to passage of initiative 200, the anti-affirmative action measure appearing on the Washington state ballot in November 1998, is sponsoring a statewide motorcade for the purpose of increasing voter awareness as to the true definition and value of affirmative action and soliciting support in opposition of I-200. Participants from Spokane, Vancouver, Everett, Yakima, Tricities, Tacoma, Bellevue and points all across the state will converge in Olympia for a mass rally on 29 August at noon. The motorcade will begin at a pre-determined time in various locations throughout the state, stopping at "pep" rallies along the way, adding to its numbers as it moves toward Olympia for the mass rally. For additional information please contact: Oscar Eason, Jr. at PO Box 80291 Seattle, Washington 98108.

Indigenous Peoples' Weekend

With two days of activities leading up to a coming together at the border of First Nations activists and supporters from both sides of the eurocentic U.S./Canadian border on October 10th. This is a powerful statement of unity and solidarity in our common struggles. By starting the work on this early we hope to include more people, groups and organizations this time.

People, groups and organizations that would like to help in the organizing of this, or groups and organizations that would like to co-sponsor this event, or those that wish up-dates on the event, please write to: NWLPSN, P.O. Box 5464, Tacoma, WA 98415-0464, or arthurmiller50@ juno.com. Please send donations to: NWLPSN, 5201 Capital Blvd, Ste 119, Olympia, WA 98501.

(Housing, continued)

substandard landlord holdings.

* Use government power of eminent domain (right to take over private property for public use) to ensure adequate low-income housing; use vacant buildings for transitional housing.
* Expand federal assistance for low- and moderate-income first-home buyers.
* Legislate "right of first refusal," whereby tenants or nonprofit housing developers have the first opportunity to buy buildings landlords wish to sell. In the end, the problem of housing is a case of their morals vs. ours, and workers must do whatever it takes to make the government meet people's basic needs.

Megan Cornish is a Senior Power Dispatcher at Seattle City Light, and co-author of "Women Workers: Sparkplugs of Labor." This article originally appeared in the July-Sept. 1998 issue of the quarterly "Freedom Socialist." To subscribe, send $5.00 to Freedom Socialist, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98118. E-mail: freedomsoc@igc.apc.org; Website: www.socialism.com •

(Unemployment, cont.)

has been improving every year since he entered office. In 1992, underemployment was a sky-high 17.3 percent.

But the way our federal government measures unemployment continues to hide the real extent of suffering and insecurity among American families. Knowing the true figures helps to explain why so many of us still feel that our jobs are on shaky ground. It also makes evident why employers in most fields still have the upper hand in negotiating wages and working conditions with their employees.

Marc Breslow is co-editor of Dollars and Sense magazine, based in Boston. Jesse Hahnel is an intern with Dollars and Sense. *Copyright 1998, Marc Breslow and Jesse Hahnel. Re-print or electronic distribution without permission is prohibited. Call the Progressive Media Project for information, 608-257-4626.* •

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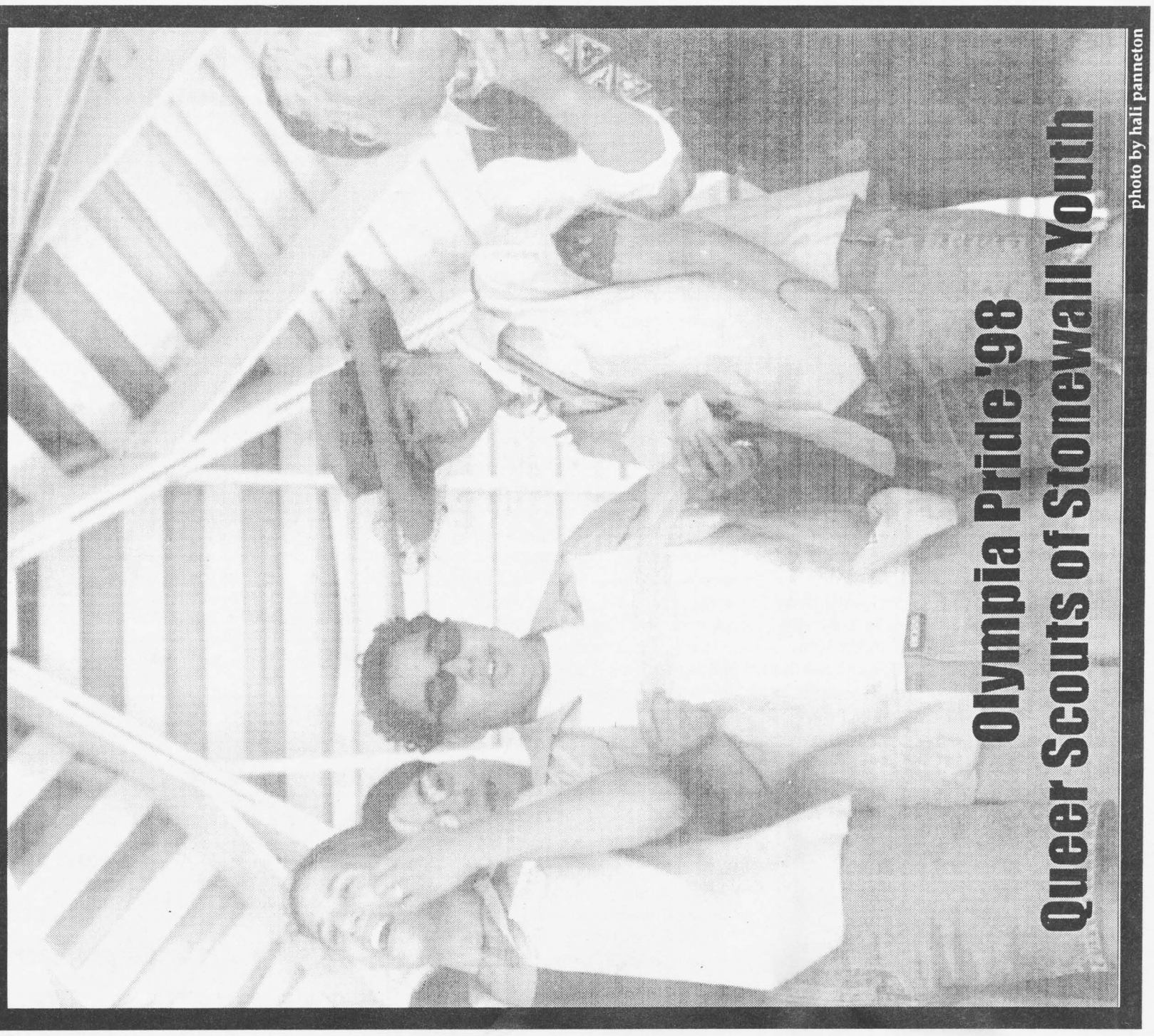

Olympia Pride '98
Scouts of Stonewall Youth

photo by hali panneton

The Crisis In Housing
&
Real Unemployment Rate

Along the Color Line
Day To Day Racism
&
Jesse Jackson at UPS

Summer Activist
Reading
Fighting Racism,
Sexism & Capitalism

Photo Essay
Art & Revolution

ADA Goes
Unenforced

Prison Interest Page

Olympia's Newest Accomodations!

- In Olympia, average yearly rent for an apartment is $6,360, while a full-time worker making minumum wage makes $10,712 annually -- meaning such a renter pays 60% of their income on housing.
- Eleven U.S. cities require companies receiving public funds to pay a "living wage" above the federal legal minimum.
- In Seattle, monthly rent for a typical one-bedroom apartment is now 100 times more than the average hourly wage.
- In the U.S., the number of poor working families needing housing assistance jumped by 265,000, or 24%, from 1991 to 1995.
- Estimated number of civilian employees in Thurston County making about minimum wage that would qualify for housing subsidy is more than ten times the number being served with housing subsidies.
- Clinton's 1999 budget would create rent vouchers or new affordable housing for 403,020 more families, or just 7.6% of those with crisis-level needs.
- U.S. families spend 75% of what they pay in taxes on food, clothing, and shelter each year.

Works In Progress
PO Box 295
Olympia, WA 98507